

## Background:

- **Community Outreach Coordinators** — In response to State Plan objectives related to community outreach and building capacity to include underserved and culturally diverse groups, funding is proposed for two Community Outreach Coordinators to reside in local communities. The enclosed executive summary provides a description of this recommendation.
- **Travel Funds for Advisory Committees** — TCDD has provided funds since FY 2000 to support travel of self-advocates and family members to participate on state level advisory committees, councils and workgroups that focus on issues of importance to individuals with developmental disabilities. This support allows individuals with disabilities and their families to participate in policy discussions about the services and programs that impact their lives. These committees are created by state law or by agency rule and TCDD offers travel support if the agency does not have travel funds. Some agencies now have travel funds and continue to support members to participate. In FY 2015, TCDD approved travel support for a two-year period which ended July 31, 2017. During the two-year time, TCDD spent \$19,656 in financial support through April 2017, and supported the following groups:
  - Consumer Direction Workgroup (HHSC paid for travel reimbursement in FY 2017)
  - Employment First Taskforce (EFTF will not be continued per the 85<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature)

Even though there will be no workgroups to provide travel reimbursement to in FY 2018 and FY 2019, TCDD is recommending to reserve \$7,500 per year for a total of \$15,000, in the event that another workgroup would need travel reimbursement between August 1, 2017 and July 31, 2019.

## Executive Committee — Agenda Item 13

### Expected Action:

The Executive Committee will consider this information, and make recommendations to the Council on this funding issue.

## Council — Agenda Item 9. A-B.

### Expected Action:

The Council will consider the Executive Committee recommendations.

## **Executive Summary**

### **TCDD Community Outreach Coordinators**

#### **Project Goal**

This project will allow TCDD to create the equivalent of a TCDD staff level position at the community level, and expand TCDD efforts outside of Austin and contract with a Coordinator who is living in the community we seek to serve. The Community Outreach Coordinator(s) would coordinate opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds and provide support to individuals involved in the community. This strategy will not only build local community capacity, but will help inform TCDD about future projects.

#### **Relationship to TCDD State Plan Goals**

TCDD's FY 2017 — 2021 State Plan includes multiple objectives related to community outreach and building capacity to include underserved and culturally diverse groups:

**Goal 1:** Create and support promising practices that enable people with developmental disabilities to be fully included in their communities and to have control over their own lives by 9/30/2021.

**Objective 1.8:** Implement at least three projects to address the specific needs of individuals with developmental disabilities who identify with a specific minority culture

**Goal 2** Improve and/or expand community-based systems to better support people with developmental disabilities or families of children with developmental disabilities to be fully included in their communities by 9/30/2021.

**Objective 2.3:** Collaborate with at least three community based organizations to reduce linguistic and cultural barriers experienced by individuals who are Spanish-speaking

**Goal 3:** Increase the access that individuals with developmental disabilities and families of individuals with developmental disabilities have to information, training, and support to advocate for themselves and/or to collaborate with allies to impact public policy, service systems, and community supports.

**Objective 3.1:** Support the participation of people living in rural areas and people who self-identify as having racial or ethnic minority background in TCDD leadership and advocacy projects.

**Objective 3.2:** Support people with developmental disabilities to provide leadership development and advocacy training.

**Objective 3.4:** Support self-advocates and family members to participate in cross-disability, culturally diverse leadership coalitions.

#### **Proposed Funding Contribution and Duration**

Up to \$200,000 each year for up to five years. Funds would include salary for (2) Community Outreach Coordinators to be identified and located in underserved geographic regions that may include South Texas/Valley, Northeast Texas, or the Panhandle. The specific region will be identified after community needs assessment with local community partners.

Funding may also cover local activities, events, and coordinator travel expenses within the region and travel to TCDD as needed.

## **Background**

The DD Act specifically calls for the services and supports it provides to be delivered “... in a manner that is responsive to the beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, language, and behaviors of individuals who are receiving the services ...”

The 2010 census figures illustrate that racial and ethnic minority communities are growing at a faster pace than the current majority population, white Americans. More than half of the 2011 Texas population, (55.2%), was of a race other than non-Hispanic white, according to U.S. Census Bureau data making Texas one of five "minority-majority" states in the country. Unfortunately, people with developmental disabilities from minority communities can face unique barriers to achieving self-determination, independence and inclusion. For this reason, the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) has prioritized Council's efforts to reduce disproportionalities and disparities across all state plan activities.

In Texas, individuals and families have varied experiences depending on their geographic region. While TCDD works with our many grantees and partners from around the state, it can be difficult to connect directly with individuals with disabilities, to understand specific needs, and to identify strategies to reduce barriers without being a visible and active participant in a local community. This initiative would create the equivalent of a TCDD staff level position at the community level.

TCDD has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to reducing disproportionalities and disparities in our state. We know that true systems change begins with all of us as Council members. Through the following projects and activities, TCDD has worked to improve outreach and inclusion among the unserved and underserved:

- Culturally appropriate community-based services and supports grant projects;
- Outreach and Development grants;
- Stipends to support translation services;
- (5) state plan objectives focusing on outreach and inclusion of culturally and geographically diverse groups (listed above); and
- Participation in Undoing Racism training with Council members, staff, grantees, and partners

## **Project Description**

The Community Outreach Coordinator(s) would coordinate opportunities for community inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds and provide support to individuals involved in the community.

Community Outreach Coordinator requirements:

- Be a current resident of the community in the identified geographic region of the state.
- Collect qualitative and quantitative data and public input (e.g., surveys, focus groups, in-person interviews) from individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to better inform TCDD state plan objectives and projects.

- Identify barriers including linguistic, cultural, and geographic access to services and supports.
- Build community connections and collaborate with community partners including TCDD grantees to create opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.
- Develop and support programming and community activities related to disabilities, diversity and inclusion.
- Engage community members to create local cross-disability and cross-cultural partnerships in the identified region.
- Share TCDD and other national best practice models to build community capacity.
- Support existing and new leaders and self-advocates to connect and collaborate on advocacy and systems change initiatives.

Other Community Outreach Coordinator responsibilities include but not limited to:

- Participate in TCDD programming meetings and report to the Council as needed;
- Develop community engagement plans;
- Maintain community database of partners and outcomes; and
- Collaborate with TCDD communications on outreach, messaging, and products.

Preferred Community Outreach Coordinator Knowledge, Skills, Abilities:

- Bilingual fluency in Spanish (as needed);
- Developing and maintaining relationships with individuals and community groups from diverse backgrounds;
- Designing and implementing community engagement plans;
- Strong commitment to valuing diversity and embracing inclusion;
- Project management, communication (verbal and written), and organizational skills; and
- Ability to work independently and part of a team.

## **Other Considerations**

The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) continues to direct Councils to enhance their capacity to reach underserved and diverse communities in their states. Other Councils across the country have created Community Outreach Coordinator positions to conduct similar tasks and achieve DD Act goals. TCDD will follow these models and collaborate with Council in other states on specific activities and AIDD outcomes. Locally, TCDD will collaborate with its state and local partners who may have resources within local communities to support the Community Outreach Coordinators. For example, TCDD may want to partner with the Texas A&M Agricultural Extension program who have a mission of education and outreach and have offices in every county of the state. Similarly, we may connect with universities and colleges in the region, existing and past grantees, our DD Network partners, and others who share our goals for community inclusion and outreach to diverse groups of individuals with disabilities. While direct supervision of the Coordinators would be the responsibility to TCDD staff, local support may include office space and collaboration on staff activities.